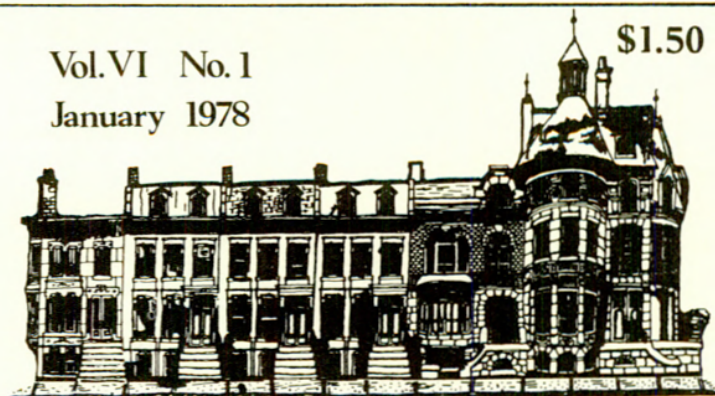


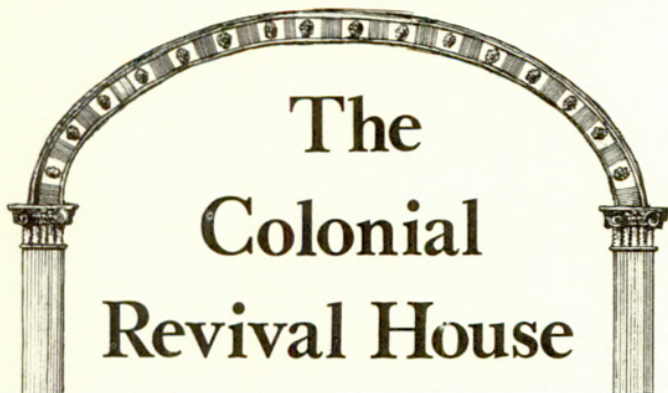
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Restoration And Maintenance Techniques For The Antique House



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Coming Next Month

Removing Woodwork for Stripping

By Carolyn Flaherty

A GREAT MANY OLD HOUSE OWNERS have found that their old house will not fit into the style classification of either Early American or Victorian. These houses, usually built in the 1890's or after the turn of the century, often seem to be a bewildering combination of Colonial detail and Victorian size and room arrangement. The Colonial detailing is a result of the enormously popular Colonial Revival style that swept the country in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

THE TYPICAL COLONIAL REVIVAL house was built much like the earlier Victorian style--often with a bay window, porch, or an asymmetrical floor plan. But the ornamental details reflect the Colonial period--a triple Palladian window, simple moldings with Classical details (dentils, garlands and swags, etc.), columns and pilasters at entrance ways, and so on.

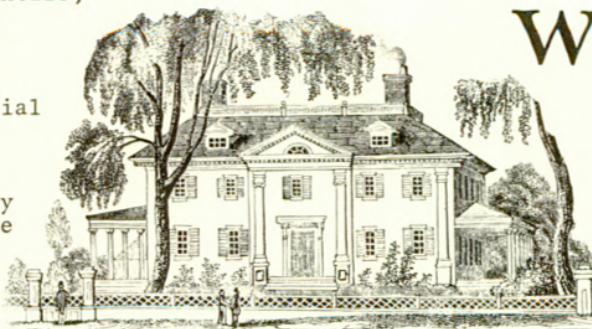
THERE WERE ALSO many Colonial Revival houses that were built to be almost exact replicas of the original period. These were usually in the Georgian manor house style--typically red brick with white wood trim. Even when these houses were meant to be copies,

there was usually at least one or two details that differed in the new model--perhaps the windows arranged asymmetrically--an arrangement never to be found in the perfectly balanced original versions.

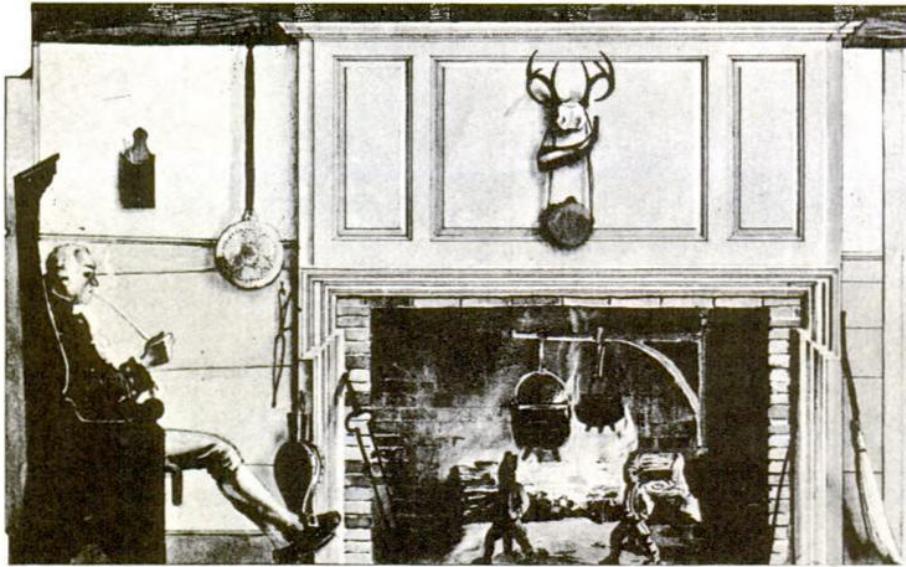
HOUSES HAD BEGUN to take on Classical detailing in the 1870's. The triple Palladian window, garland and swag motifs were often found on Victorian houses, particularly those built in the Queen Anne style. (The Queen Anne Revival, of course, was actually the "Colonial Revival" of England.) But as a fashion in its own right, the Colonial Revival did not really take off until the 1890's.

How It Started

WHY DID SO MUCH of the domestic architecture of the United States swing back to the look of an earlier period? Part of the movement was one of reaction. Reaction against the excesses of the Victorian style, some of which was bringing fairly bizarre by



(Continued on page 8)



Heating With A Fireplace

By Marc Erdrich, Washington Depot, Conn.

ONE WAY TO BEAT the high cost of fuel these days is to make more intensive use of your fireplaces. Despite what you may have heard about the fuel inefficiency of fireplaces, they can help you reduce oil and gas consumption—if you observe some common-sense rules. It is true that not much progress has been made in fireplace design since Count Rumford published his famous treatise (see *The Journal*, March 1976). But the chances are that even if you have the best possible fireplace from a design standpoint, you are probably losing most of the heat produced by the fire right up the chimney. In fact, if the room in which you have your fireplace has central heating as well, your fireplace may be a net consumer of heat, since it may be drawing heated air from other rooms straight up the chimney.

BUT YOU CAN CHANGE ALL THAT without spending a lot of money. First step is to reduce the amount of heat going up the chimney. Ideally, this would mean closing the damper entirely so that no hot air could escape from the room. Unfortunately, one of the byproducts of fire is smoke, so it is necessary to have some opening in the flue that permits smoke to escape from the house. In a well-constructed fireplace, however, only a small opening in the damper is required to discharge all smoke to the outside. So once you have a good fire going—and that means a good bed of coals beneath the grate—close the damper as far as you can without getting smoke in the room.

THE NEXT STEP is to close off all sources of central heat to the room in which you have the fireplace. This means shutting off any radiators in the room and closing the doors to the room (if there are any). The idea is to use the heat from the fireplace most efficiently, and that means drawing in cool room air and replacing it with warm

air from the fireplace. By isolating the room from central heat, you ensure that you are cutting down on fuel consumption in your furnace.

IN FACT, depending on the size of your house and the weather conditions outside, you may find the fireplace can heat more than one room—in which case you can open the doors to a second room, or possibly a third, without reducing the temperature to uncomfortably cool levels. Fortunately, most old houses have doors between all rooms for just this reason. If your original doors have been removed, you

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may wish to consider installing replacements. Or you might want to consider compartmentalizing the house with portieres (see The Journal, Sept. 1977, p. 103) as was done in the 19th century.

THERE ARE SEVERAL other tricks to increase fireplace efficiency. First, prepare the hearth so that it is not necessary to have a screen in front of the fire. A screen in front of the fire cuts down on heat transfer to the room. Such things as fenders can be used to keep embers from escaping into the room. One of the best ways to insure a well-behaved fire is to use only well-seasoned wood.

Fake Logs



ANOTHER TRICK is to line the hearth with aluminum foil. Ordinarily, the hearth absorbs a tremendous amount of heat. (Touch the brick or stone in front of the fireplace next time you have a fire going.) But with the aluminum foil over it, the hearth remains cool to the touch and the heat previously lost is now reflected throughout the room.

NOW YOU ARE READY for a fire. What should you burn? There was a time when the only answer to that question was "wood." But recently there has been a flood of new fireplace fuels for sale in stores and lumberyards. Pre-packaged logs are among the most common. Made of compressed sawdust soaked in paraffin, these so-called "logs" are easy to start and generally burn for about three hours. Surprisingly, they give off a tremendous amount of heat. The trouble is that they produce little or no embers and nearly all the heat rises straight up the chimney. As a result of this significant drawback, I would only recommend packaged logs for apartment dwellers or homeowners who use their fireplaces only occasionally...or in situations where gathering and storing wood is too burdensome.

THOUGH THE PRICE of fake logs (under \$1) compares favorably with the cost of real wood, because so little of the heat produced actually ends up in the room, fake logs should not be considered as an alternative source of energy for heat.

Selecting Wood



WOOD (the real kind) is best for heating. But here is where a lot of people run into trouble. Just any wood won't do when you are using firewood for heat. Consider this: A cord of white oak yields 27 million BTU's (the standard measure of heat content) while a comparable cord of white pine yields only 11 million BTU's. From this example, it should be clear that an important step in improving fireplace heat output is choosing the right wood to burn.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, wood from broadleaved trees (hardwoods) is more desirable as fuel than wood from conifers (softwoods). There are a few exceptions: Red cedar, for example, is a better fuel wood than butternut.

MAPLE is an excellent source of heat and, like oak, has good coaling qualities. Birch is also a good source of heat (contrary to popular belief), though not nearly as good as the common varieties of fruitwood, such as apple, pear, peach and plum (which, when dry, give off an exquisite aroma). Other common woods having a high heat content are ash, beech, dogwood (one of the best) and hickory.

IF YOU BUY WOOD, the first thing to remember is the exact dimensions of a full cord of wood: 128 cu. ft. stacked in a pile 4 ft. high by 4 ft. wide by 8 ft. long. Don't accept anything less when you are paying for a full cord. A face cord, or a side cord, is ordinarily a pile 4 ft. high and 8 ft. long and anywhere from 12 to 36 in. wide.

WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT to determine whether or not wood has been seasoned properly just by looking at it, there are a few things to check for. Look for splits in the ends of the logs and an overall gray color as a sign of at least some drying. Also, feel the wood for dampness. If possible, ask the seller to split a piece for you. If the wood hasn't dried sufficiently, it will feel moist to the touch.

Tips On The Fire



ONE THING TO REMEMBER when you've got a fire going: It's the glowing embers, not the flames, that provide the heat to the room. You can increase the amount of heat available to the room by providing a large area for coals to collect under the fire. If you have andirons, you can raise the front end by placing bricks under the legs. The problem is that the logs will roll toward the back of the fireplace and you'll have to rig something that will keep them from rolling right onto the floor.

AN ALTERNATIVE is to buy one of the grates specially designed for this purpose. I bought one from Emil and Althea Dahlquist of Clinton, Conn. It's nothing more than a steel grate with a high front and low back from which a metal sheet protrudes to prevent logs from rolling off the grate. This arrangement encourages coals to slide onto the floor of the fireplace toward the front. The device is sold under the name of "Radiant Grate."

WHEN THE HOT COALS pile up under the grate, the amount of heat radiating into the room is truly amazing. (For another way to generate a lot of coals in a fire, see article on next page—Ed.)

Auxiliary Devices



THERE ARE AUXILIARY devices you can buy that will capture additional heat from your fireplace. The decision whether or not to use any of these devices is based on a combination of economics and aesthetics. One common device uses a series of tubes placed within the fireplace, above and/or around the fire. By convection, or assisted by an electric motor, the tubes

This One



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transfers heat to air that then circulates back to the room.

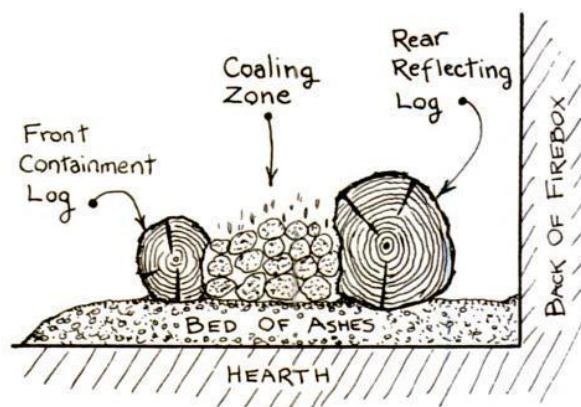
THESE TUBE DEVICES are sold under such names as: Heat Catcher, Convect-O-Heater, Stovulator, Grateolator, and a host of others. While they will improve the heat efficiency of a fireplace, they do have some drawbacks. They are expensive. Popular models cost anywhere from \$250 to \$375 (cheaper models tend not to last). The cost could be worth it, of course, if you use your fireplace extensively. Also, these heat catchers are bulky and their appearance inside the fireplace might offend some tastes. Too, the blower on some units does require an additional source of power and does create a low hum similar to a dehumidifier.

ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE is a new, old idea, which

is now being marketed under the name of "Better 'n Ben's." It's essentially a wood burning stove of contemporary design that is backed by an adjustable metal plate that fits tight against the fireplace opening. The chimney becomes a stove pipe, and with the stove operating properly you should be able to heat several rooms. Of course, this is not everyone's idea of a fireplace—but it is more fuel-efficient than an open fire.

ONE LAST CAUTION: People have been selling fireplace improvers ever since the late 18th century, and most of them have disappeared from the marketplace. So proceed with caution. Try out all the free ideas given here first. If you then decide that you need greater heat efficiency, you can purchase a unit that meets your needs—after you have seen it demonstrated to your satisfaction.

How To Build A High-Heat Fire



I USED TO BUILD fires using a fire grate—until I finally learned a better way. Now I'm getting the same amount of heat and burning only about half as much wood. The basic idea is to produce as many glowing coals as possible and as little flame. A flaming fire is pretty—but it produces heat that just goes up the chimney. Glowing coals on the other hand produce radiant heat that puts a lot more usable heat in the room.

CONTROL OF AIR FLOW is the key to making a high-heat fire. When air circulates underneath a fire (as with a grate) it tends to produce flames that send heat up the chimney. With my system, great care is taken to prevent air from getting at the bottom of the fire.

START WITH A BED OF ASHES (at least 2 in.) on the bottom of the firebox. If you use andirons to keep logs from rolling out of the fireplace, then the legs of the andirons should be covered with ashes. Next, take your largest log (should be 8-10 in. dia.) and bed it firmly in the ashes at the back of the firebox. Then take a smaller log (about 5 in. dia.) and bed it in the ashes about 4-6 in. from the rear log.

INTO THE SPACE between the front containment log and the rear reflecting log you can then place your kindling and light the fire. As the fire starts to catch, feed wood into the space between the front and rear logs.

Wood that is between 4 and 6 inches in diameter works best.

AS THE FIRE STARTS TO BURN, an intensely hot "cooling zone" is formed between the front and rear logs. The heat generated by the fire is reflected back into the zone by the front containment log and the rear reflecting log. The ashes at the bottom prevent air from getting underneath the fire and promoting too rapid burning. Soon, an intensely hot bed of coals is produced that radiates heat into the surrounding room. You feed logs into the cooling zone as needed.

EVENTUALLY, the front and rear logs will burn through. As this happens, they are pushed into the cooling zone with a poker and replaced with fresh logs of comparable size.

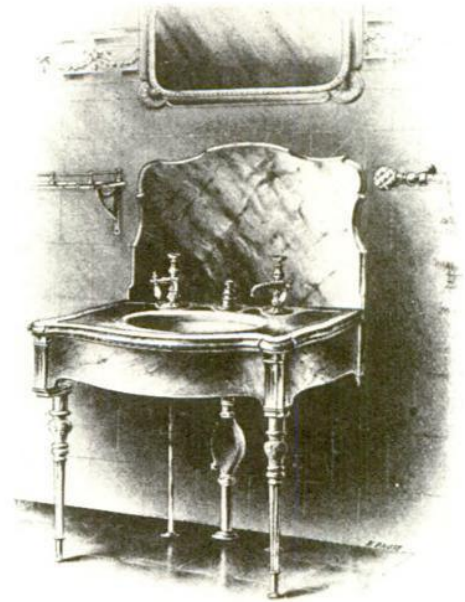
IF YOU ARE GOING AWAY for a few hours (or even overnight) the bed of coals can be covered with ashes and the fire will be intact when you return.

THIS TYPE OF FIRE doesn't produce the leaping flames and crackling logs one tends to associate with the great halls of Merrie Olde England. But if you are concerned with getting the most heat out of a given supply of wood, this "cooling zone" fire is the best I've ever seen.

--R. A. Labine, Sr.

Removing Plating From Old Brass Fittings

By H. Weber Wilson



SOME OF THE NICEST features of an old house—the bathroom fittings—are often disregarded (or discarded!) because their current condition is so ugly. An old faucet or soap dish that is muddy brown or scaly green isn't terribly appealing. But underneath all the grime, oxidation and paint spatters is a beautiful solid brass antique.

ORIGINAL BRASS BATHROOM FITTINGS are in high demand today. People are eagerly seeking cup holders, towel bars with brass ends and glass rods, soap dishes designed to hang over the sides of old bath tubs, and related bits of nostalgia. Cleaned and polished, these examples of old-time craftsmanship are being sought not only for old renovated bathrooms, but also to lend period touches to contemporary settings.

OLD FITTINGS were made of brass because it is a metal that will not rust. However, it will oxidize—and eventually turn almost black—if it is not polished regularly. As a consequence, plating came into use, first nickel and then chrome. Plating not only eliminated the need for polishing, it made the fittings look modern as well. In many people's minds, brass became synonymous with the 19th century, which they were trying to leave behind. This identity with a past century is why brass is becoming popular once again.

IF YOU HAVE OLD PLATED FITTINGS, chances are the plating is worn in spots. You may wish to have the fittings replated, or you may wish to take them down to the brass. Replating can only be done by a plating shop. Removing the old plating to get down to the bare brass can be done by a plating shop—or you can do it yourself.

REMOVING OLD PLATING requires using strong acids, which are very dangerous materials. Using any acid requires a lot of careful preparation, handling and disposal. So before beginning the acid stripping process, take careful note of the procedure outlined below.

Initial Precautions

- ▶ DETERMINE WHERE you will do the acid stripping. It should be an area with ample ventilation, large enough to move about easily, and free from children, pets and other kibitzers.
- ▶ SET UP A FAN to blow off acid fumes.
- ▶ WORK AT A SOURCE OF RUNNING WATER with proper drainage. Never pour acid down a drain without diluting it with copious amounts of running water.
- ▶ THE STRIPPING PROCESS requires mixing two acids, but don't combine them until just before they are needed. And don't keep the mixture tightly sealed as the container could burst with disastrous results.

Materials Needed

- Commercial strength hydrochloric and nitric acids
- Rubber or chemically resistant plastic gloves
- Eye protection—goggles or mask
- Glass container in which to mix the acids
- Glass, porcelain or stainless steel dish—wide and shallow—in which items to be stripped will be placed
- Tweezers or pincers and a wool swab. Be certain the material is real wool as many "wool" items today contain a large percentage of synthetic fiber that will dissolve in the acid
- Old work clothes to wear in case of spills or drips

ANY ITEM YOU PLAN TO STRIP must be taken off the wall or sink. Trying to de-plate an attached faucet or fitting will almost certainly result in drips that will damage surrounding areas. Also, it will be very difficult to reach the backs and undersides of many fittings. Polishing is also more difficult if the fitting is left in place.

THE MIXTURE REQUIRED to strip nickel and chrome plate is one part hydrochloric acid and three parts nitric acid. This is obviously a highly potent combination, so it should not be handled in great quantity nor kept around after the de-plating project has been completed.

COMMERCIAL STRENGTH ACID is best as it works fastest, but it is sometimes difficult to obtain. Many pharmacies no longer carry chemicals, so you may have to go to a chemical or laboratory supply house. A few phone calls should tell you where you can obtain the acids; just be sure to transport them with care. Separately, hydrochloric and nitric acids can be kept tightly sealed. Their containers should be glass.

The Process

A HALF PINT of the mixture will be sufficient to strip a pair of faucets, a soap dish, and perhaps the ends of a towel bar. Don't mix the acids until your work area is set up and your gloves and goggles are on. Then combine the two carefully in the proper proportion and pour a small amount into the dish. Finally, place the fixtures in the acid.

WHEN THE ACID first contacts the metal it will bubble and give off strong vapors, which you must be careful not to breathe. After the initial frothing, the reaction slows down, but still take care not to breathe directly over the stripping pan.

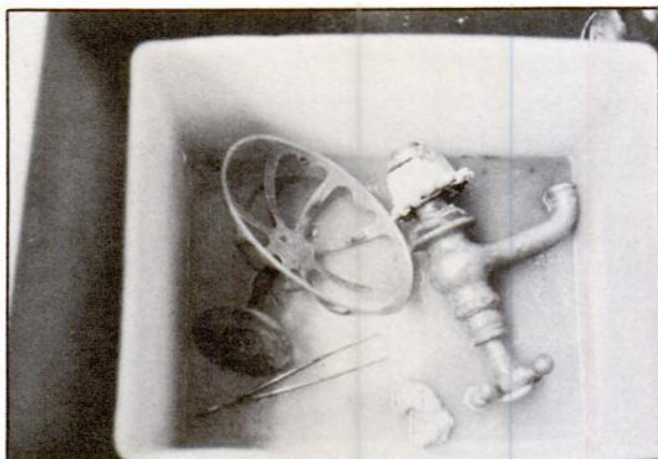
HOLD THE WOOL SWAB with the pincers and coat all the chrome surface that needs to be removed. Leave the swab and the pincers in the dish so that none of the acid drips on you or your clothes.

AS THE ACID eats away at the plating, the exposed brass will take on various shades of brown, red and green. Because there is just a thin coat of acid at work, it doesn't act especially fast, and the fixtures will probably require an additional swabbing with fresh acid. NOTE: Don't put too much fresh acid in the dish. Besides giving off a lot of fumes, keeping the piece submerged in acid can begin to pit the brass. By swabbing on thin coats of acid with the wool, you control the rate of metal removal.

WHEN IT LOOKS LIKE the plating has been removed, pick up the fixture with the pincers and thoroughly rinse it with water. Then check it under a light to make sure all of the plating has disappeared. Often there are thin streaks of nickel remaining that will require recoating with acid.



Adequate safety precautions are a must: Goggles for eye protection, rubber or plastic gloves, and tongs and tweezers for handling acid-dipped material.



Fixtures are stripped using only small amount of acid. Tweezers and wool swab are used to wipe film of acid onto the old plating, which controls the amount of acid that contacts the metal.



After acid stripping, fixtures require considerable polishing. A buffing wheel makes the job easier, but it can also be done with old-fashioned elbow grease.

AFTER YOU'VE REMOVED all the plating from the fixtures, it is advisable to dispose of the remaining acid. Dilute it heavily with water to a ratio of about 1:15, then wash it down the drain with a good deal more.

Polishing The Brass

THE STRIPPED FIXTURES are now all brass, but are still as ugly as ever. The next step is to get them all shined up, which is not difficult if you have a good polish and a buffing wheel. (If you don't have a regular wheel, there are buffing attachments you can get for your 1/4" drill.)

PROFESSIONAL METAL FINISHERS use polishes that come in sticks. Sears carries the three grades used: Tripoli, Cut & Color, and Jewelers Rouge—the final buffing polish. If you don't have enough items to warrant setting up a buffing wheel, you can use elbow grease and a good liquid or paste polish. (One good

polish is "Golden Glow," sold by Ball & Ball, 463 W. Lincoln Highway, Exton, PA 19341.)

AFTER POLISHING, the question is: "To lacquer or not to lacquer?" Lacquer will keep the full shine longer, but it will eventually wear through. (Wear is especially rapid on bathroom fittings that are constantly used.) In order to re-polish a brass piece that has been lacquered, you first have to strip off the lacquer.

I HAVE FOUND that the "universal" lacquers available in spray cans are not very good on metal, and that professional quality lacquers are hard to find in small quantities. As a result, I prefer to keep the polished brass uncoated, and commit myself to a program of periodic re-shining. It is better to brighten up the fixtures frequently, rather than waiting until they are heavily oxidized. It takes only minimal effort to shine up slightly dulled brass, but if it has become heavily tarnished you might even have to take the fixture off its mounting in order to get it polished up again. ■■



Overcoming Musty Odors

BASEMENTS, dresser drawers, shower stalls, or entire houses sometimes become plagued by "musty odors." The odor is only the symptom of another problem: Mold and mildew growth.

MOLD AND MILDEW SPORES are in the air everywhere—all the time. Given the right combination of moisture, temperature and food, the spores will take root and start to grow. Mildew spores will thrive on textiles, leather, wood and paper—especially in damp places that are poorly lighted and ventilated.

THE BASIC REMEDY for keeping a home free from musty mildew odors is to keep the house clean, well ventilated and dry. For example, a house that has been closed up for a while may take on a musty odor. Usually, all that is required to eliminate the smell is to air the house out thoroughly. If this doesn't do the job, then heat the house with the furnace or stove for a few hours, then open the windows and doors to let out the warm air that has taken up the excess moisture in the house. Use an electric fan to promote air circulation.

MUSTY ODORS in closets and bureaus can be alleviated by leaving them open to air out periodically. A small fan in the bottom of a closet will help air it out faster. Also, keep a 100-watt bulb burning continuously in a musty

closet to help dry it out. You can also spray the interior of the closet with an aerosol that contains a fungicide. Not all room sprays contain fungicides, so you'll have to read labels carefully.

DRESSER DRAWERS that have acquired a musty smell can be left to air out in direct sunlight. Also, the interior wooden surfaces can be washed with a cloth dampened with a sterilizing solution made up of 3 cups water, 1 cup full-strength Clorox, 1/4 cup borax and 1/8 cup detergent. After washing with this solution, allow wood to dry thoroughly, preferably in direct sun. (Be careful not to spill this sterilizing solution on finished parts of the dresser. It could cause stains.)

CLOTHES PUT AWAY in closets and bureaus should always be laundered or dry cleaned. Mildew grows much more rapidly on soiled clothing. Paradichlorobenzene crystals (mothballs) that deter moths will also inhibit mildew. They can be spread between the folds of garments that are stored in drawers that have had a mustiness problem.

MUSTY ODORS IN BASEMENTS usually disappear if the space can be heated and ventilated. If the basement has had a damp floor, sprinkle it with calcium chloride (chloride of lime). If mildew is growing on painted basement walls, wash them down with a stiff bristle brush using the sterilizing solution described previously. Also inspect the cellar for sources of dampness. You may have to wrap cold-water pipes with insulation to prevent dripping during humid summer weather (hardware stores sell special insulating tape for this purpose). Cement up any cracks that admit water during wet weather. An electric fan in the basement will also help the ventilation process. ■■



While this is a fairly large house, it is quite typical of many homes built during the Colonial Revival. Even though it is rambling and asymmetrical in the late Victorian fashion (even having a Queen Anne tower) its moldings, cornice, and window

frames are in the restrained Classical style. The Palladian triple window, Ionic columns on the tall portico, and the delicately-turned balusters (like those found on a New England Colonial staircase) come straight out of the Georgian period.

(Colonial Revival--Cont'd from page 1)

the 90's. Just as important as the way these styles looked was the fact that they were foreign--English, Italian, French.

THERE WAS A GREAT PATRIOTIC feeling afoot that America should have its own style and those who were the leaders of the Colonial Revival felt that the early American house in the Georgian style was the symbolic house of America. The fact that the Georgian house was almost totally derived from the English seemed not to concern most of the patriotic architects; it had been here long enough to be American now.

GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE was the prevailing style of the 18th century in both England and America, named for the Kings George--I, II, III and IV. It was based on the strict Roman forms as set forth in the Italian Renaissance (16th century) by the architect, Andrea Palladio. His publications were used in 18th century England to create an architecture that turned away from the Gothic and went back to the pure Classic forms of Imperial Rome and Hellenic Greece.

WHILE CHURCHES, BANKS, and other public buildings in the Colonial Revival period often imitated the more grandiose aspects of ancient

architecture, home builders used the simpler forms of Classical details--slender columns, small porticos, Greek moldings, Palladian windows--to create the Classic look. But the use of Classic elements in public buildings did serve to encourage the whole trend back to earlier building modes. There was one group of public buildings in particular that really caused the Colonial Revival to become enormously popular--and that was the great Columbian Exhibition in Chicago.

The White City

THE CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR of 1893 affected the taste of the American people for a generation. This beautiful exhibition was seen by millions of visitors who were impressed with the neo-classical buildings of McKim, Mead and White, and the fairy tale quality of the buildings along the lagoon landscaped by Frederick Law Olmstead.

AMERICAN COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE was also well represented at the Fair. The State of Virginia erected a replica of Mount Vernon, the Massachusetts Building was a neo-Georgian mansion, and Independence Hall served as a model for numerous buildings.



Unlike the house on the opposite page, this 1899 home in New Britain, Conn., adheres closely to the Georgian Colonial model. Its shape is traditionally rectangular, with a hipped roof, windows are almost symmetrical, and the general compo-

sition is restrained. Architectural features in the Georgian manner--triangular pediment and fanlight, dentilled and plain moldings, and Doric-columned porch--give the house an 18th century look. (Photo courtesy of Walnut Hill Hist. Soc.)

THE MOST STARTLING FEATURE of the architecture was that it was all white. After decades of private homes and public buildings in deep reds, browns and dark buffs, this "White City" must have quite a sight to the late Victorian eye.

BUILDING AFTER BUILDING was constructed from white marble, granite or limestone, with white terra cotta trim or painted white woodwork. Interior woodwork was also painted white. Because the planners of this "City Beautiful" had agreed on all white, the neo-Georgian buildings, traditionally painted gray, blue, or grayish-green with white trim, were now all white in their reincarnation.

THE REAL HARMONY of the architecture lay in the fact that the planners had agreed on a set of uniform standards--color, architectural features like cornice heights, etc. and the use of materials in order to produce this lovely effect.

BUT THE MILLIONS of visitors, and those who saw the photographs, remembered the frostings--the Classic columns, triangular Greek pediments, arches, porticos, etc., and went home wanting something similar. And when they either built or remodelled their house into something similar, they painted it all white.

The Colonial Revival Interior

THE MOST DRAMATIC CHANGE in interior decoration that took place around the turn of the century was the fashion for white woodwork. For nearly two-thirds of a century, woodwork had been dark and massive. Now it was simpler in those houses built in the Colonial Revival style and painted in a glossy off-white known as "Colonial Ivory."

PAINTING ALL THE WOODWORK WHITE to look "Colonial" was probably much influenced by the Chicago Fair and a popular misconception that Georgian woodwork was white both inside and out. Actually, the Colonial house usually had painted woodwork in grayed shades of blue, green and gold against white walls.

IN TUNE WITH the lighter woodwork, pastel shades came into fashion again for the first time since the early 1800's. Wallpaper patterns tended to the floral (similar to the 1850's) designs, and realistic representations of lace, medallions, statuary and metalwork (for instance, a gold filigree design on a pastel shade.) At the Wall Paper Pavilion at the Fair, Lincrusta Walton (previously finished in tones of deep brown and buff) was shown in ivory and gold.



This view of the Lion Fountain and Obelisk in the Grand Basin of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair shows why it was known as the "White City."

UNITY IN PAINT COLOR AND fabric pattern were used to simplify a room. Room arrangements changed. The very Victorian center table was pushed in a corner. A Colonial student lamp might replace a fancy Victorian lamp, most likely banished to the attic. Large collections of bric-a-bric were eliminated in the interest of "bareness and restraint." People do not really change very quickly, however, and often Victorian clutter was replaced with non-functioning spinning wheels, candle molds, etc.

AMERICAN ANTIQUES were coming into their own, interest in them actually beginning with the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. An influential writer on decoration, Clarence Cook, observed in 1878, a "mania" for antiques in Boston. This, he said, was "one of the best signs of returning good taste in a community that has long been the victim to the whims and impositions of foreign fashions."

ALTHOUGH THE GENUINE item was often prized, most people still preferred the new to the old. By the turn of the century "Colonial" reproductions were being turned out--a fashion that goes unabated to this day. And, just as today, good reproductions of Queen Anne chairs, Chippendale tables and other

good furniture styles were marketed along with the tawdry. For example, Sweet's Catalog, circa 1906, featured a toilet--remarkably similar to the two others on the same page--labeled "Colonial."

REPRODUCTION ORIENTAL RUGS became widely used and large Victorian carpets were sent out to be cut up and used as smaller rugs. Because small rugs replaced large carpets, floors were again sanded and polished to a furniture-like shine.

IT WAS ACTUALLY only the homes of the fairly wealthy that incorporated all the new features of this, or any Revival style. The average home often had no more than white-painted neo-Georgian woodwork and perhaps a reproduction chair or two to match their Colonial Revival exteriors. Because other major decorating fashions were also popular--the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Bungalow style, as well as the "golden oak" and Tiffany periods, the average middle-class home generally had a combination of many of these plus older pieces. For instance, a new reproduction Windsor chair would be in the same room as a wicker rocker. Lighting fixtures remained the same or changed with the replacement of electricity from the older gas fixture.

Disastrous Effects

IT SHOULD BE MENTIONED that some of the worst disasters visited on the Victorian house were in the name of the Colonial Revival. It is one thing to have a house built in the style with simple woodwork painted white and its architectural features built in the neo-Georgian style. But many turn-of-the-century homeowners took the advice of the decorators who ever mindlessly espoused the "new look." Early 20th century decorating books are chock full of advice on removing overmantels because they were "too fussy," painting the woodwork (although it might be burl walnut) for an "airy" look, or ripping out a beautifully detailed Eastlake ceiling medallion. Many a restorer of a Queen Anne frame house or a Gothic Revival row house has come to regret the Colonial Revival for its excesses. Or, as Shakespeare would have said if he had been into restoration, "To thine own style be true."

Neo-Colonial Decoration

BECAUSE THE Colonial Revival house imitated the formal Colonial house, it is important to avoid the "rustic" look in decoration. Wrought iron, crude lighting fixtures (betty lamps, etc.) and primitive furniture will be out of place. Adjustments have to be made for the Victorian architectural features a room might have--bay windows, elaborate plaster friezes, high ceilings, etc.--that may require a more eclectic decorating scheme. On the next page we present a row house in Brooklyn in which the owners have successfully coped with the Colonial details on a house that has a Victorian floor plan.

A Colonial Revival Townhouse

IN THEIR 1909 LIMESTONE, the Fudjinskis have taken their decorating cue from the simple, Classical moldings and architectural features. The formal rooms of the house are decorated in a manner appropriate to a well-to-do English colonist with 18th century style English furniture, silk and crewel work and accents of Chinese export ware.

ALL THE WOODWORK, mantel, dado and door and window frames, are painted Apollo Room Blue (a Williamsburg paint color). The small back parlor (top photo) features a collection of antique Chinese cloisonne on the mantel. The cherry Queen Anne chair was bought for \$12 at an auction. Joan has covered it with white linen upholstery fabric, and embroidered a crewel design adapted from a Williamsburg pattern. The piecrust table, cherry clock over the mantel and framed antique Chinese silk give formal 18th century accents.

IN THE LARGER FRONT PARLOR (lower right) Joan has made drapes in a rich burgundy shade--a color that is equally appropriate for the Victorian bay windows as well as an accent color in a Georgian room. She used an olive green Scalamandre silk to cover the wing chair. The dark blue bordered Oriental rug picks up the olive green and burgundy in the floral design.



Products For The Old House

Cast Iron Spiral Staircase

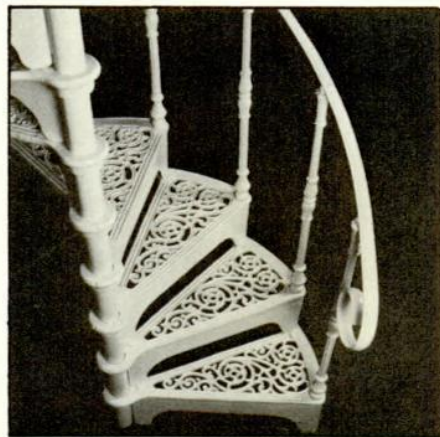
A CANADIAN FIRM distributes an English-made cast iron spiral staircase. Treads feature a Victorian pattern and balusters are available in Georgian, Victorian or elaborate grape design.

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A CAST IRON STAIRCASE is not, of course, inexpensive. A typical 12 ft. installation would be about \$1200. Prices are quoted retail and wholesale for architects and designers. Free brochure and price list are available.

THIS FIRM, Steptoe & Wife, also distributes a wide selection of reproduction cast-iron furniture and accessories: 19th Century lampost, Queen stove, a detailed high back conservatory chair, pub table and others. A 32-page illustrated catalog is \$1.00.

Write to: Steptoe & Wife Antiques Ltd., Dept. OHJ, 99 Yorkville Avenue, Cumberland Court, Toronto, Ontario M5R 3K5 Canada. (416) 967-3337.



Helpful Publications

Preservation Magazine

A NEW MAGAZINE, "American Preservation," has recently been published and should be welcomed by those involved in historic and neighborhood restoration.

WITH A HEAVY EMPHASIS on full-color photos, combined with an attractive format, it is an exceptionally good-looking magazine. Articles focus on finished restorations and neighborhoods in the process of preserving their architectural heritage. The first two issues have featured a wide range of styles and areas: Helena, Montana; Salem, Mass.; Annapolis, Maryland; Portland, Oregon, with a good view of both the homes and the people involved in the area.

THERE ARE ALSO stories about individuals--their houses and experiences, as well as news about agencies, associations, tax reforms, awards, etc., and book reviews on preservation-related publications.

A CHARTER subscription is \$9.00 and the magazine is published six times a year. Write to: American Preservation, The Bracy House, Dept. OHJ, P.O. Box 2451, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Stenciling Book

ONE OF THE JOURNAL'S subscribers, and a stenciler by profession, Megan Parry, has a new book which is aptly titled "Stenciling."

MEGAN DISCUSSES: How to make stencils--all-over patterns, borders, multicolor designs; How to invent and discover designs; How to plan a room (old or new) for stenciling. Some of the projects include floors, ceilings, doors, furniture, floorcloths.

THERE ARE ALSO many small projects like tee shirts, lunchboxes, note paper, bathtubs, and window shades.

TO ORDER "STENCILING," send \$12.95, plus 75¢ postage and handling, to: Litton Educational Publishing, 7625 Empire Drive, Florence, KY 41042.



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